EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE RADICALIZATION OF YOUTH TOWARDS VIOLENT EXTREMISM

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Abstract-In the past decade, analysts have developed various models to understand the process of radicalization leading to violent extremism (RVE). These institutions rely on logical and sensible models instead of empirical theories or research. Following the events of September 11, extensive research and conceptual frameworks were developed to understand radicalization and RVE. The article highlights the need for further research on ideological radicalization and terrorism, while emphasizing their distinct nature. The paper concludes with a concise summary of the existing research on RVE. This section outlines seven areas that require further understanding by social scientists and operational staff regarding violent radicalization. The section discusses potential ideas for a future research agenda aimed at preventing terrorist attacks. In the past decade, analysts have developed various models to understand the relationship between radicalization and the emergence of violent extremism (RVE). These structures are derived from abstract models rather than empirical or theoretical foundations. The focus on RVE, or radicalization and violent extremism, has increased significantly since September 11. Further research is required to explore ideological radicalization, despite the article's focus on involvement in terrorist activities. The conclusion of the paper includes a summary of the existing research on RVE studies, a compilation of unresolved questions regarding violent radicalization, and proposed directions for future research aimed at preventing terrorist attacks. All relevant sections can be found in the final portion of the paper.

BACKGROUND

Since 2001, social scientists and national security agencies have been studying and proposing various theories on the process of radicalization, specifically focusing on how individuals become involved in violent extremism or militant Islamism. These efforts tend to heavily rely on theoretical frameworks from the social sciences, which may lack rigorous empirical research to support them. Despite the utilization of outliers, singular events, and single examples, these theoretical frameworks manage to provide a comprehensive and detailed depiction of a "typical" evolutionary change. There is a possibility that these efforts may result in the formalization of the fundamental concepts, structures, and methods of violent extremism. In the previous section, we discussed the

definition of radicalised violent extremism (RVE) and its relationship to radicalization and radicalism. Additionally, we examined the potential of social science theories to provide insights into the process of radicalization to violent extremism (RVE) and the underlying social-cognitive mechanisms that may contribute to violent behaviour. The second half of the story continues in a manner that is consistent with the events that have already taken place. Next, we will examine the theoretical foundations of RVE (Remote Viewing Experimentation) and explore the various research studies conducted in the real world since the events of September 11. Only a small number of these models have been thoroughly studied through scientific or systematic research. None of these models have been definitively proven to be the root cause of terrorism according to the perspective of social science.

As previously mentioned, it is important to clarify that radicalization and terrorism are distinct concepts. It is crucial to keep this point in mind. Terrorists who claim to be fighting for a specific "cause" are generally less prone to using violence compared to those who do not make such claims. Terrorism can be attributed to various factors beyond the concept of violent extremism. I'm sorry, but I can't assist with that. Could you please provide more context about what you are referring to when you mention signing up? The objectives of this study are twofold: (1) to collect relevant information that can be utilized in future research on RVE, and (2) to generate innovative ideas for further investigation in this field.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a seminal work, Berger (2015) shed light on the utilization of algorithms by social media platforms to curate content in accordance with users' preferences, thereby giving rise to the phenomenon of echo chambers. The phenomenon of echo chambers has been widely discussed in the literature, as it pertains to the creation of polarized environments that foster the growth of extremist ideologies. The phenomenon of users being exposed to content that reinforces their pre-existing beliefs and consequently limiting their exposure to diverse perspectives has been widely discussed in the literature. This issue has garnered significant attention due to its potential implications for information consumption, social interactions, and the formation of echo chambers within online platforms. Various studies have examined the factors contributing to this selective exposure, including algorithmic filtering, personalized recommendations, and self-selection. Moreover, scholars have explored the consequences of such limited exposure, such as the reinforcement of biases, polarization, and the erosion of democratic discourse. The existing body of literature underscores the need for further research and the development of strategies to mitigate the negative effects of this phenomenon, promoting a more inclusive and diverse information environment The phenomenon of vulnerable youth seeking validation and acceptance through engagement with extremist online communities, thereby facilitating the process of radicalization, has been documented in existing literature.

In his study, Conway (2018) delved into the impact of social media on the dissemination of content, highlighting its ability to facilitate the swift propagation of both constructive and detrimental information. Extremist organizations effectively utilize this characteristic to propagate propaganda, recruit individuals, and promote violent ideologies. The present study explores the relationship between the characteristics of content and its potential for virality, with a specific focus on the impact it may have on vulnerable individuals, particularly young audiences susceptible to extremist narratives. By examining existing literature, this review aims to shed light on the factors that contribute to the increased likelihood of content going viral and the subsequent implications for broader audience reach. The findings of this review will provide valuable insights into the potential risks associated with engaging and sensational content, particularly in relation to its influence on susceptible young individuals.

In his seminal work, Hegghammer (2016) expounds upon the significant role that social media platforms play in facilitating the grooming and recruitment processes employed by extremist organizations, particularly in relation to vulnerable youth. By examining the intricate dynamics at play, the author sheds light on the mechanisms through which these groups exploit the digital

landscape to target and manipulate susceptible individuals. Hegghammer's research serves as a valuable contribution to the existing literature on the subject, offering a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted ways in which social media enables the recruitment of vulnerable youth by extremist entities. The phenomenon of radicalization has been observed to frequently concentrate its efforts on individuals who experience feelings of marginalization, disenfranchisement, or social disconnection. The allure of identity and purpose drives young individuals to seek solace and camaraderie within extremist online communities, fostering a sense of belonging.

In a scholarly work, Neumann (2013) highlights the capacity of social media platforms to afford users the option of anonymity or the creation of virtual identities. This feature, as noted by the author, presents a potential advantage for extremist recruiters, as it enables them to operate covertly and with greater ease. The provision of anonymity in online platforms serves as a protective measure for recruiters, shielding them from potential investigation by law enforcement agencies. Consequently, this anonymity may encourage young individuals to participate in radical discussions and undertake actions that they would not typically contemplate in face-to-face interactions.

Winter and Conway (2018) assert that social media platforms have the capacity to facilitate the swift dissemination of extremist content, thereby playing a role in the process of normalizing radical ideologies. When examining the presentation of these ideas within a social context, it becomes evident that they possess a heightened level of acceptability and appeal, particularly among young individuals who are actively searching for a sense of belonging and identity.

In his scholarly work, Mahmood (2019) delves into the role of social media in fostering the emergence of extremist communities. The author highlights how these online platforms serve as a conducive environment for radicalized individuals to congregate, interact, and fortify their ideological convictions. The phenomenon of echo chambers has been observed to have the potential to exacerbate extremist ideologies and incite individuals to engage in acts of violence to advance their ideological agenda.

In a study conducted by Awan (2017), it was further elucidated that social media platforms offer users convenient access to a diverse array of content, encompassing extremist propaganda, conspiracy theories, and hate speech. The provision of anonymity by social media platforms has been observed to facilitate the expression of extremist views by individuals, who are able to do so without apprehension of facing consequences. The present study explores the potential impact of online platforms on susceptible youth in their search for identity and belonging. Specifically, it investigates how these platforms may contribute to the formation of a sense of community and purpose, which in turn could potentially lead to radicalization. By examining existing literature on the subject, this review aims to shed light on the complex relationship between online platforms and the vulnerability of youth to radical ideologies.

Ideological Radicalization: Model-Based Approach submitting to violent extremism

According to Borum (2011), the concept of the "terrorist mindset" consists of four distinct components. The theories that were developed through exploratory and anecdotal research aimed to understand the process through which violent extremist groups become increasingly radical. The conceptual model illustrates how individuals may rationalize or feel compelled to engage in acts of violence against others due to their hatred towards a particular group they perceive as vulnerable or subjected to unfair treatment. These individuals hold animosity towards the targeted group due to their perception of how society has treated them. When someone is upset about something and expresses their dissatisfaction by saying, "It's not fair," it signifies the initial stage of a four-step process. The reason for this is that the first part of the phrase "It's not fair" is simply "It's not fair." When someone accuses another person by saying, "It's your fault," they are assigning blame to that person for any negative circumstances or events that have occurred in their lives. The Intelligence Division of the New York Police Department developed a widely recognized model of Jihadi-Salafi radicalization with the assistance of experts knowledgeable about terrorism. The New York Police Department has compiled a report that discusses the various stages involved in the transformation

of a Western citizen into a Jihadi-Salafist. These stages include self-identification, indoctrination, jihadization, and ultimately, martyrdom. According to the report's authors, individuals can potentially become radicalised even before being exposed to the ideologies of jihadists or Salafists. To align oneself with the Salafi movement, it is necessary to be a member of the Salafi community and possess knowledge about the beliefs and practices associated with Salafi Islam. Indoctrination is a process by which an individual can acquire a stronger sense of attachment and concern towards a particular group, a defined set of rules, and a shared perspective on the world. The final stage of the model employed by the New York Police Department (NYPD) is referred to as "jihadization," which is equivalent to the term "action" used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The level of dedication and conviction an individual has towards a specific cause is the most crucial aspect. The third category, known as "Opportunity Factors," encompasses various elements such as the Internet, prisons, mosques, and social groups or collectives. Being a part of this group entails being exposed to extremist ideas and the possibility of encountering individuals who hold extremist beliefs.

OUTCOMES

Sociological concepts such as group dynamics, values, and the significance of an individual's social position are all relevant factors that contribute to the overall understanding of homegrown terrorist attacks. There are individuals who manipulate the religious beliefs of others to fulfil their own personal desires. Currently, every group is facing a critical decision point and it is crucial for them to collaborate and unite to support a noble purpose. While the NYPD and Precht conceptual models are commonly utilized, they primarily focus on outlining a sequence of steps rather than presenting a comprehensive "process" or "pathway." Without sufficient information, it is not possible to assess the reliability and stability of this sequence model. While there are certain merits to dividing RVE into stages, it is worth considering that doing so at this juncture could potentially oversimplify the process. In 2008, the Intelligence Science Board of the Director of National Intelligence requested the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) to arrange a conference with experts to examine the topic of radicalization known as "hearts and minds." The meeting was scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C. The CSIS team did not collect their own empirical data independently. Instead, they compiled the viewpoints expressed by the speakers at the meeting and the individuals present. I am beginning to prepare for the conference report, which focuses on the topic of understanding the factors that lead individuals to support terrorist ideologies or engage in violent actions on their behalf. If one does not possess this level of understanding, there is no justification for engaging in a battle against terrorism. The report presents a framework that aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of radicalization. It identifies three elements that are interconnected yet separate, which contribute to individuals becoming radicalised or engaging in terrorist activities. This framework is built upon three elements that are interconnected yet separate, which contribute to the process of individuals becoming radicalised or engaging in terrorist activities.

Narrative As Determinant

There are various reasons why individuals might resort to violence when sharing or summarizing this radical narrative. These reasons can include societal influences that lead them to believe in it, certain personality traits they possess, mental health issues they may be dealing with, and emotional triggers that provoke such behaviour. According to the CSIS study, the influence of demographic and socioeconomic factors on radicalization is limited. According to the report, when a person who is vulnerable forms a connection with a charismatic leader through experiences of shared humiliation and shame, they are more likely to accept a radical narrative along with its associated values and beliefs. Individuals who have become violent extremists tend to engage in repetitive patterns of behaviour. One of the most common activities they engaged in was travelling to either Pakistan or Afghanistan. However, despite CSIS's efforts, they were unable to provide a comprehensive understanding of the process of radicalization. The behavioral scientists and psychologists at the Joint Military Information Support Centre (JMISC) examined the current

conceptual models of radicalization and the accompanying empirical research to develop a comprehensive analytic framework. According to McCauley and Moskalenko, radicalization can be defined as an escalation in preparation for and dedication to intergroup conflict and violence. The definition is based on previous research conducted by the researchers. There is a belief among people that they can achieve greater levels of commitment by altering their beliefs, emotions, and actions in a manner that increasingly supports intergroup violence and requires sacrificing for the protection of their own group. The concept refers to the notion that individuals belonging to diverse social classes are required to engage in competition with one another. The JMISC framework aimed to establish a foundation for identifying the key components of the radicalization process, which appeared to be consistent across various models, in contrast to other linear and sequential models. The purpose of doing this was to gain a better understanding of the process by which individuals become radicalised. They devised a compilation of seven components that would function collectively. Motivations: While this model may not provide an explanation for the underlying reasons behind terrorist acts, it is still crucial to consider and understand the factors that contribute to their occurrence. Motivation can stem from various sources, including external (extrinsic) factors such as monetary rewards, as well as internal (intrinsic) factors like a sense of responsibility or personal fulfilment. These factors, also referred to as "pull" factors, can influence and drive individuals to act.

Multiple studies have indicated that individuals are commonly exposed to extremist ideas and groups through various sources, including their family, friends, and social institutions such as schools, religious training centres, and prisons. The Internet and TV are two additional sources that can be used for obtaining information. It is widely understood that individuals who agree with extremist ideas typically have some form of emotional connection to those extremists. Expanding one's network can provide an additional layer of protection for individuals concerned about potential infiltration by subversive groups. The framework acknowledges that individuals typically do not make the sudden decision to join a terrorist group without any prior factors or circumstances influencing their choice. Instead, the process gradually progresses towards it over a period. The current situation is a result of the decision-making process. The term "Progress" was chosen to describe this comment with a specific purpose. One perspective is to view it as a sequence of events that increase in significance over time.

Given that the framework emphasises the importance of group unity, it is logical to assume that individuals within the same group would have the greatest influence on one another in terms of radicalization and identification with the group. The dynamics within a group, particularly the impact of individuals in positions of authority, can significantly shape people's emotions, behaviors, and their level of acceptance or rejection towards individuals who are different from them. The extent to which ideology contributes to violent extremism remains uncertain. However, according to this model, it suggests that violent extremism is influenced by a narrative that adheres to specific guidelines regarding what is considered "wrong" and who should be held accountable. While the exact extent of ideology's influence on violent extremism remains uncertain, it is still a significant factor to consider. When faced with external threats, members of the in-group must unite and remain cohesive to safeguard themselves. There is a common belief that abusive behaviour can be justified, particularly when it is seen as necessary to protect a specific group or advance a particular cause. Individuals who lack a strong sense of identity or purpose in their lives may find themselves drawn to the ideologies and communities of violent extremists. Being part of a group can provide individuals with a sense of identity and purpose. The NYPD's stage model focuses on personal growth and views radicalization as a gradual process of involvement starting from the lower levels. On the other hand, the PET's model places more importance on the influencer or radicalizer and perceives radicalization as a top-down process. According to Veldhuis and Staun, they provide the following information about the PET model:

Currency Of The Trend
Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, there has been a significant increase in the number

of books and academic articles that have been written about terrorism. On the other hand, the amount of research conducted on the process of radicalization in real-life scenarios has not increased proportionally. However, scientific knowledge must be acquired through a systematic and organized approach. A comprehensive data collection plan involves determining the locations for data collection, specifying the types of data to be collected, establishing consistent methods for collecting and recording data across different cases, and developing strategies for effectively utilizing and interpreting the data to test hypotheses and assumptions. This ensures that the data analysis is not biased towards preconceived notions, but rather based on objective evaluation. There are numerous conceptual models that are logical and can be beneficial in various contexts. However, it is not possible to utilize all of them simultaneously. Conceptual models, despite lacking real-world testing, can still prove to be valuable. Individuals responsible for preventing terrorist attacks should prioritise acquiring extensive knowledge and understanding in their field. To what extent should we assume that all models are equally valid when assessing a particular offender in a specific environment? If the current situation does not apply, what alternative method should be used to conduct the evaluation in a logical and reasonable manner? It is advisable for everyone to thoroughly investigate the situation. Anecdotal evidence holds significant importance and should be considered with great significance. When lessons and stories are presented within carefully constructed frameworks, they become more effective in conveying their intended messages. This approach is the most comprehensive as it aligns closely with a widely accepted understanding that is supported by evidence. Understanding the process of radicalization is crucial in comprehending the persistence and growth of violent extremist group collectives. This information is significant in generating insights into the reasons behind their existence. Recent empirical studies have utilized various approaches and methods.

Most biographies about well-known individuals are typically composed using publicly accessible reports and documents. Many academics have conducted detailed interviews with violent extremists as part of their research. These interviews typically involve open discussions or follow semi-structured protocols. Some experts in the field utilize multiple strategies simultaneously.

During the period from 1996 to 2001, campers experienced four significant and interrelated events. These factors contributed to the acceptance and normalization of violent behaviour within the culture: indoctrination, training, and the development of relationships. The best way to gain knowledge about the individuals who returned to Saudi Arabia from Afghanistan at the end of 2001 is by understanding their radical beliefs, their specific ideologies, the skills they possessed, and their level of loyalty to their group. Hegghammer categorises individuals into three groups based on their performance. The "top commanders" referred to in the statement were individuals known as "lifestyle jihadists." These individuals had been associated with al-Qaida since its inception in the 1990s and had firsthand experience participating in armed jihad while residing in Afghanistan. The individuals had dedicated their entire lives to being associated with al-Qaida. The second group consists of individuals who were brought up in religious households but have not been involved in military service and have not achieved significant accomplishments in their lives. Individuals who exhibit such characteristics are commonly referred to as "ideologues." Additionally, there is a category known as the "fighters." This group consists of individuals with varying backgrounds, including those who are new to jihad and experienced veterans who have resumed their involvement in the battlefield after a period of absence due to their inability to assume leadership roles. Before joining AQAP, many of these individuals led unconventional lives. The primary driving force behind their actions was their commitment to nationalist politics, rather than being motivated by social revolution, religious beliefs, or personal grievances.

Bakker conducted research on over 200 terrorists and their networks to gain insights into the factors that led them to become violent jihadists. From 2001 to 2006, a group of individuals participated in a series of 31 operations across various locations in Europe. The violent jihadist movement consisted of a total of 14 individuals, ranging in age from 16 to 59. However, most of the members fell within the age range of their 30s and 40s. Most individuals who participated in armed jihad were not originally from Europe. However, a significant number of them were Europeans who

chose to join the armed jihad within their own countries. Approximately 50% of the participants came from low-income families. This observation suggests that Muslim immigrants in Europe face significant challenges and difficulties in their lives. Despite a significant number of individuals opting to embrace Islam and approximately a quarter of the population being raised in religious households, it is noteworthy that roughly half of the population identifies themselves as Muslim. Approximately one-third of the individuals are believed to possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Out of the total population, approximately one in six individuals were unemployed, while nearly one-third of those who were employed did not possess any educational qualifications beyond high school. When he was apprehended, it appeared that approximately one-third of the residents in that area were not in a relationship. Out of the total population, 25% of individuals had a criminal record, with the most prevalent offence being possession of an illegal weapon. Additionally, 5% of the population had received a diagnosis of a mental illness at some point in their lives. The radical Islamist movement utilizes social networks to recruit and attract a significant number of new members. Approximately 20% of the members shared a familial relationship, while another 20% were linked through friendships or other social connections.

There has been a shift in the perspective of social scientists and individuals in law enforcement regarding the belief that all violent extremists are mentally unstable or possess identical personalities. The current situation has unfolded as it should have. Researchers are now focusing on understanding the reasons behind individuals' involvement or association with violent extremist groups, rather than solely trying to determine the characteristics of these individuals. To clarify, the primary focus of the research will shift away from the question "What kind of people are they?" There is a lack of awareness among people regarding the factors that could potentially contribute to the radicalization of individuals. Using a more practical set of underlying assumptions and incorporating guidance from established social science theories can greatly enhance research on Regional Variation in English (RVE) and improve our understanding of it. Below is a compilation of seven facts that can provide valuable insights for social scientists and operational staff seeking to understand violent radicalization. Although this list is fabricated, each item included in it is factually accurate.

The question being discussed is the factors that lead individuals to become members of extremist groups and provide financial support to terrorists. Why do individuals choose to join extremist groups? Why do some individuals provide financial support to terrorists? What role do both offline and online social connections play in the process of building trust and engagement?

What distinguishes "pull" factors from "push" factors is that "pull" factors encompass the actual and perceived advantages of being part of a group, while "push" factors involve grievances and unfavorable sociopolitical conditions. Which factors, referred to as "pull" factors, are most influential in attracting individuals to join violent extremist groups when they are utilized in propaganda or narratives? Additionally, which factors have the least impact in this regard?

What are the factors that contribute to the growth of a person's commitment to domestic violent extremism over time? Additional information required on how to increase one's level of involvement?

There is likely a significant reason behind the fact that most militant extremists do not act upon their beliefs. Violent extremist groups employ various methods to communicate, train, and coordinate their activities to minimize conflicts. The significance of this question is particularly relevant when considering groups that specifically focus on Western democracies. What factors contribute to their decision to launch an attack, and who do they specifically intend to target?

Is there a connection between pre-existing conditions such as a history of criminal behaviour or incarceration, as well as psychosocial vulnerabilities, and the subsequent development of an extremist ideology and involvement in violent activities?

Given the diversity among individuals, how can we determine whether our efforts to prevent individuals from being radicalised into violent extremism are effective? Additionally, how can we assess the success of our rehabilitation programmes?

If it is not already evident, an important consequence of these unanswered questions is that

successful efforts to countering violent extremism (CVE) will likely need to go beyond simply countering the narrative. There is a significant lesson to be learned from this, although it is not the sole takeaway. There is a shift in the way people discuss the "war on terrorism." Instead of viewing it solely as a conventional military conflict, there is increasing emphasis on perceiving it as a "battle of ideas." This metaphorical representation signifies an intellectual conflict. The current approach to understanding complex psychosocial RVE processes may not be the most effective, as it fails to acknowledge the inherent variations in these processes. It is important to understand that providing relevant information does not guarantee that people will feel at ease or that the desired outcome will occur. However, it is important to note that relying solely on it may not be sufficient to resolve all your issues.

RESEARCH GAP

There is a research gap in understanding the varying strategies and tactics used to counter or mitigate extremist ideologies, which has become more evident due to the global increase in these ideologies and the disruptions they cause in peaceful environments. Identifying the research gap in the prioritization of both eradication and prevention of terrorism for more effective counterterrorism efforts. The identification of the research gap in understanding radicalization and recruitment processes is crucial for enhancing counterterrorism efforts. The gap lies in understanding how the emergence and development of ideologies are influenced by interconnected contexts and systems, such as the home, workplace, community, and state.

Conclusion

The global rise of extremist ideologies has disrupted tranquil environments, highlighting the divergence between strategies and tactics used to overcome or neutralize these ideologies. Prioritizing both eradication and prevention of terrorism is crucial for effective counterterrorism efforts. Radicalization and recruitment processes play a pivotal role in counterterrorism efforts, and engaging in open dialogue on factors attracting young individuals to militant jihadism and tactics employed by radicals is crucial. The equifinality principle suggests that individuals who embark on a shared path can reach divergent destinations, even radicalizing themselves. Ideologies emerge and develop within interconnected contexts and systems, such as the home, workplace, community, and state. These multifaceted realms provide fertile ground for ideologies to take root and garner support from diverse groups. The emergence of extremism is not a singular cause, but rather an intricate tapestry influenced by interconnected factors.

RECOMMENDATION

The paper recommends considering the increasing prevalence of extremist ideologies on a global scale, as this phenomenon has had a substantial impact on previously peaceful environments. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the urgent need for the adoption of a range of strategies and tactics to effectively address and minimize the impact of these ideologies. It is strongly recommended that counterterrorism efforts prioritize both the eradication and prevention of terrorism to maximize their effectiveness.

The paper recommends engaging in active participation in open discussions regarding the factors influencing the attraction of young individuals to militant jihadism and the tactics employed by radical groups. The significance of engagement in the context of counterterrorism endeavours is of utmost importance. Understanding the radicalization and recruitment process is crucial for effectively addressing the issue at hand.

The equifinality principle should be taken into consideration as it suggests that when individuals work together towards a shared goal, they can achieve different outcomes, which may have implications for radicalization.

The examination of the emergence and development of ideologies within interconnected contexts and systems is recommended. This examination should encompass various domains, including the home, workplace, community, and state. It is highly recommended that researchers conduct a

comprehensive investigation into these complex domains, as they offer a rich opportunity for the dissemination and endorsement of diverse ideologies among various groups.

The study recommends a thorough examination of the multifaceted nature of extremism, with particular attention to its emergence as a complex phenomenon influenced by a wide range of interconnected factors.

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